2.

AN ABRIDGMENT OF THE HISTORY OF THE BIBLE.

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AN

ABRIDGMENT

OF THE

History of the BIBLE.

CHAP. I.

Which takes in the Time that passed from the Creation of the World to the Flood.

THE World was *(a)* created about Four Thousand Years before the Birth of JESUS CHRIST. In six Days GOD made all the Creatures that are therein; and on the sixth Day He created *Adam*, who was the first Man. He made him after his own Image, and gave him Dominion over the rest of the Creatures. *Adam* after his Creation *(b)* was put into the ter-

(a) Gen. I. *(b)* Gen. II.

reſtrial Paradiſe, otherwiſe called the Garden of *Eden*, with *Eve* his Wife, who was formed out of one of his Ribs: And they would have lived happy in that Place, if they had continued in their Innocence, and kept the Law that GOD had given them.

BUT *Adam* and *Eve* (*a*) being fallen into Rebellion, through the Temptation of the Devil, and having broken the Commandment that GOD had given them, not to eat of the Fruit of a Tree which was in the Garden of *Eden*, which the Scripture calls, *The tree of knowledge of good and evil*; they loſt their Innocence and their Happineſs together, were made ſubject to Death, and driven by GOD out of the terreſtrial Paradiſe. By this Fall of *Adam*, Sin and Death entered into the World; and all Men had been for ever miſerable, if GOD had not taken Pity on them. But GOD immediately promiſed, (*b*) that *the Seed of the Woman ſhould bruiſe the Serpent's Head*; that is, that Men ſhould be delivered from Sin, from Death, and from the Power of the Devil, by JESUS CHRIST, who ſhould be born of a Virgin.

In

(*a*) Gen. II. (*b*) Chap. III. 15.

In the Book of *Geneſis* (*a*) *Moſes* tells us, who were the Children and Deſcendants of *Adam*. We ſee by the Hiſtory of thoſe Times, that the Life of Man was then much longer than it is now, and that they lived many Hundreds of Years: But it may be alſo obſerved, that Sin began to reign in the World preſently after the Creation. *Cain*, the Son of *Adam*, ſlew his Brother *Abel*, and had a wicked Poſterity. Nevertheleſs GOD was known to and worſhipped by the Patriarchs, and eſpecially in the Family of *Seth*, who was one of the Sons of *Adam*. Among theſe Patriarchs, the Scripture makes mention of *Enoch*, whom GOD took out of the World, ſo that he died not: GOD having been pleaſed thereby to crown his Piety, and to teach Men that there are Rewards after this Life for thoſe that live well. But in Proceſs of Time (*b*) the Poſterity of *Seth* was corrupted likewiſe, and mingled with the Wicked. The Earth was filled with Crimes, and the Corruption grew ſo great and general, that GOD ſent the Flood, which drowned the whole World, *Noah* excepted,

(*a*) Chap. IV. and V. (*b*) Gen. VI. and VII.

who being a Man that feared GOD, was with his Family preſerved from this Inundation; GOD having commanded him to build an Ark, in which he was ſhut up when the Flood came. The Memory of this Deluge is preſerved, not only in the holy Scriptures, but alſo among divers Nations of the World, as we may find in many antient Hiſtories. The Flood happened One Thouſand Six Hundred Fifty ſix Years after the Creation of the World.

CHAP. II.

Of the Time between the Flood and the Call of Abraham.

NOAH being come out of the Ark *(a)* after the Deluge, GOD made a Covenant with him, and gave a new Sanction to the Law of Nature, in order to turn Men from Wickedneſs and Vice. *Noah* had three Sons, *(b) Shem*, *Ham*, and *Japheth*; and all the World was afterwards peopled by their Poſterity. The Deſcendants of *Shem* ſettled chiefly in *Aſia*, thoſe of *Ham* ſpread for the moſt part in *Africa*, and thoſe of *Japheth*

(a) Gen. VIII, and IX. *(b)* Ch. IX. 18, 19. Ch. X.

Japheth in *Europe*. This is the Original of all the People of the World, as may be ſeen more at large in the tenth Chapter of *Geneſis*.

SOME time after the Flood, *(a)* Men undertook to build the Tower of *Babel*; but GOD confounded their Language, ſo that not underſtanding one another any longer, they were diſperſed into divers Countries. Idolatry began about this Time to prevail, and then GOD was pleaſed to chooſe a People, among whom the true Religion might be preſerved. For this Purpoſe He called *Abraham*, who lived in the City of *Ur* in *Caldea*. He appointed him to leave the Country wherein He was born; He engaged him to ſerve Him, and fear Him; He commanded him to go into the Land of *Canaan*, and He promiſed to give that Country to his Deſcendants; to multiply his Poſterity; and that the Meſſias ſhould be born of his Race. The Call of *Abraham* happened Four Hundred and Twenty ſeven Years after the Flood.

(a) Gen. IX.

CHAP. III.

Of the Time between the Call of Abraham, *and the going of the Children of* Iſrael *out of* Egypt.

ABraham *(a)* being come into the Land of *Canaan*, tarried there ſome Time with *Lot* his Nephew, without having any Child. This Country was then inhabited by the *Canaanites*, who were an idolatrous and a very wicked People; particularly the Inhabitants of *Sodom* (where *Lot* dwelt) were ſo wicked *(b)* and had committed Sins ſo horrible, that GOD deſtroyed that City, after that He had brought *Lot*, with his Wife and Daughters, out of it. Fire from Heaven fell down upon *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, ſo that theſe Cities with their Inhabitants, and all the neighbouring Country, were burnt to Aſhes.

WHEN *Abraham* was an *Hundred* Years of Age, *Iſaac* his Son was *(c)* born, by a ſupernatural *Power*. *Iſaac* was the Father of *Jacob*; and *Jacob* had twelve Sons, who were the Heads of

(a) Gen. XII, &c. *(b)* Ch. XIX. *(c)* Ch. XXI.

of the twelve Tribes or Families of the Children of *Israel*. The two most considerable of these Tribes were afterwards, the Tribe of *Levi*, from which the Priests and Ministers of Religion were taken; and the Tribe of *Judah*, which was the most powerful, which was for a great while possessed of the Royal Authority, and was to subsist till the coming of JESUS CHRIST, from which also JESUS CHRIST was to be born.

JOSEPH, *(a)* one of the Sons of *Jacob*, having been sold and carried into *Egypt*, through the Jealousy and Hatred of his Brethren, GOD raised him up to the chiefest Dignity of that Kingdom, by the Means of the King of the Country. Some Years after, *Jacob*, the Father of *Joseph*, was constrained by the Famine that was in the Land of *Canaan*, to go and sojourn in *Egypt*, with all his Family. About this Time lived *Job*, a Man illustrious for his Piety, and Patience under Afflictions.

AFTER the Death of *Jacob (b)* and *Joseph*, the Children of *Israel* encreased

(a) Gen. XXXVII, &c. *(b)* Exod. I, &c.

and multiplied ſo exceedingly in *Egypt*, that King *Pharoah* became jealous of them, and endeavoured to deſtroy them. But GOD ſent *Moſes*, who having wrought many Miracles, and ſmote *Egypt* with ten Plagues, obliged *Pharoah* to let the Children of *Iſrael* go out of his Territories. This Departure of the Children of *Iſrael* out of *Egypt*, happened Four Hundred and Thirty Years after the Call of *Abraham*.

CHAP. IV.

Of the Time between the going out of Egypt *and the Building of* Solomon's *Temple.*

THE Children of *Iſrael* being come out of *Egypt*, walked upon (*a*) dry Land through the Red Sea; and *Pharaoh*, who purſued them, attempting to go through after them, was there drowned with all his Army. Fifty Days after the Deliverance from *Egypt*, GOD publiſhed the (*b*) Ten Commandments of the Law upon Mount *Sinai*. He gave afterwards the Political Laws to

(*a*) Exod. XIII, XIV, &c. (*b*) Exod. XX, &c.

to *Moses*, as also the Ceremonial Laws which the *Israelites* were to observe. GOD did not suffer the Children of *Israel* to enter into the Land of *Canaan* immediately after their coming out of *Egypt*, but they staid in the Wilderness forty Years, under the Conduct of *Moses*.

MOSES dying at the End of these forty Years *(a) Joshua* succeeded him; and after having subdued the Nations and Kings that inhabited the Land of *Canaan*, he settled the *Israelites* in their Stead. After the Death of *Joshua*, this People were governed by the Judges that GOD raised from time to time, until the Prophet *Samuel* (who was the last of the Judges) set up *Saul*, the first King of the *Israelites*. After *Saul* reigned *David*, who was both a King and a Prophet; to whom succeeded *Solomon* his Son, who built the Temple of *Jerusalem*, Four Hundred and Fourscore Years after the coming out of *Egypt*, and about a Thousand Years before the coming of JESUS CHRIST.

CHAP.

(a) Josh. I, &c.

CHAP. V.

Of the Time between the Building of Solomon's *Temple, and the Captivity of* Babylon.

AFTER *Solomon*'s Death, *(a) Rehoboam* his Son being ſet on the Throne, ten Tribes of *Iſrael* revolted, ſo that He ruled over two Tribes only, which were thoſe of *Judah* and *Benjamin*. Thus, there were two Kingdoms formed, the one called the Kingdom of *Iſrael*, which comprehended the ten revolted Tribes, the other called the Kingdom of *Judah*, which conſiſted of the two Tribes that remained faithful to *Rehoboam*.

THE Kingdom of *Iſrael* ſubſiſted about Two Hundred and Fifty Years: *Jeroboam* was the firſt King of it. This Prince, fearing that his Subjects would return to the Obedience of *Rehoboam*, King of *Judah*, when they ſhould go to *Jeruſalem* on the ſolemn Feſtivals to worſhip GOD in the Temple, and to offer their Sacrifices there, ſet up a falſe Worſhip in his Kingdom. He made two golden

(a) 1 Kings XII, &c.

golden Calves, which they worſhipped under the Name of the GOD of *Iſrael*. He appointed ſolemn Feaſts and Prieſts; ſo that in the Reign of *Jeroboam* and his Succeſſors, Idolatry was eſtabliſhed in the Kingdom of *Iſrael*. All the Kings of *Iſrael* were Idolaters, and kept up the falſe Worſhip which *Jeroboam* had eſtabliſhed. GOD ſent ſeveral Prophets to the ten Tribes, to turn them from their Sins, and to preſerve the Knowledge of himſelf among them. The moſt eminent of theſe Prophets was *Elijah*: He propheſied in the Time of *Ahab*, who was one of the wickedeſt of the Kings of *Iſrael*. At laſt, the Kingdom (*a*) of the ten Tribes was deſtroyed, and *Samaria*, their capital City, was taken in the Time of *Hoſea*, the laſt King of *Iſrael*, by *Salmaneſer* King of *Aſſyria*, who carried away the ten Tribes into his own Kingdom, from whence they were diſperſed into divers Countries, and have never ſince been ſettled again in their own Land.

THE Kingdom of *Judah* laſted an Hundred and Thirty Years longer than that of *Iſrael*. The capital City of this King-

(*a*) 2 Kings XVII.

Kingdom was *Jeruſalem*, where the true GOD was ſerved in the Temple of *Solomon*. But Idolatry crept in alſo into the Kingdom of *Judah*. GOD raiſed up Prophets from Time to Time, who oppoſed the Errors and Sins of that People, who threatned them with the Judgments of GOD, and foretold the coming of the Meſſias. *Iſaiah* was one of the moſt eminent of theſe Prophets. There were alſo ſome good Kings, who endeavoured to aboliſh Idolatry, as *Jehoſhaphat*, *Hezekiah*, *Joſiah*, and ſome others. But the People continuing *(a)* in their Sins, GOD, after he had long threatned them, and afflicted them at ſundry Times by the neighbouring Kings, deſtroyed alſo the Kingdom of *Judah*. *Nebuchadnezzar* King of *Babylon* beſieged *Jeruſalem* in the Reign of *Zedekiah*, the laſt King of *Judah*. He took it, and burnt it with the Temple, and carried away the People to *Babylon*, about Four Hundred and twenty Years after *Solomon* had laid the Foundation of the Temple of *Jeruſalem*, and Five Hundred and Fourſcore Years before the Birth of our LORD.

CHAP.

(a) 2 Kings XXV.

CHAP. VI.

Of the Time between the Captivity of Babylon, *and* JESUS CHRIST.

THE *Babyloniſh* Captivity laſted Seventy Years, as the Prophet *Jeremiah* had foretold *(a)* it ſhould. When theſe Seventy Years were expired, the *Jews (b)* returned into their own Country by the Leave of *Cyrus*, King of *Perſia*, under the Conduct of *Zorobabel*, to rebuild the Temple of *Jeruſalem*. But in this they were interrupted by the neighbouring Nations, and this Work was delayed to the Time of *Darius*, King of *Perſia*, who commanded that the Temple and the Service of GOD, ſhould be ſet up again. The Prophets *Haggai* and *Zechariah* lived at that Time, and they exhorted the *Jews* to labour in building the Temple. Some Years afterwards, *(c)* *Nehemiah* went into *Judea* by the Permiſſion of King *Artaxerxes*. He cauſed the Walls of *Jeruſalem* to be built and reſtored Order and civil Government in that City.

FROM

(a) Jer. XXV. 11, 12. *(b)* Dan. IX. 2 Eſd. IV, V, &c. *(c)* Neh. I, &c.

FROM the rebuilding of (*a*) *Jeruſalem*, in the Reign of *Darius*, to the Deſtruction of that City, which happened after the coming of JESUS CHRIST, there was Seventy Weeks of Years; that is to ſay, Four Hundred and Ninety Years, according to the Prediction of the Prophet *Daniel*. The *Jews* being returned into their own Country, were for ſome Time ſubject to the Kings of *Perſia*, and afterwards to the Kings of *Syria*. They were expoſed to divers Perſecutions, whereof the laſt, and moſt cruel, was that of King *Antiochus*, (*b*) who plundered and profaned the Temple of *Jeruſalem*, and made uſe of Torments in order to force the *Jews* to renounce their Religion, as may be ſeen in the Hiſtory of the *Maccabees*. This was he that forced *Mattathias*, and many *Jews*, to enter into a Covenant together for the Preſervation of their Religion and Liberty. They gained many Victories by the Courage and Conduct of *Judas Maccabeus*, and *Jonathan*, both Sons of *Mattathias*. Having recovered their Liberty, and again ſet up the Exerciſe of their Religion, they were a long Time under

(*a*) Dan. IX. 24. Matt. XXIV. 15. Luke XXI. 20. (*b*) 1 Macc. I. 2 Macc. V, VI, VII.

under the Government of the Prieſts, who ſucceeded *Judas* and *Jonathan*, and took the Title of Kings. Theſe are they who are called *Aſmoneans*. At laſt, the *Jews* fell under the Dominion of the *Romans*, who made *Herod* King over *Judea*; and it was this *Herod* that reigned when JESUS CHRIST came into the World.

CHAP. VII.

Of the Birth of JESUS CHRIST; *of his Life and Death, his Reſurrection and Aſcenſion into Heaven.*

THE Time in which GOD had reſolved to ſend his Son being come, JESUS CHRIST was born in *Judea*; and many Things fell out, that made his Birth remarkable: Nevertheleſs, he did not quickly make himſelf known to the *Jews*; nor did he begin to exerciſe his Miniſtry before he was Thirty Years of Age, and that he had been baptized by *John* the Baptiſt, his Forerunner. We have the Hiſtory of the Life of JESUS CHRIST in the Goſpel, and

and there are three Things principally to be conſidered in this Hiſtory, *viz.* the Doctrine of JESUS CHRIST, his Miracles, and the Holineſs of his Life. The Doctrine he preached was moſt holy, and tends only to the Glory of GOD, and the Good of Mankind. He wrought a great Number of Miracles, which manifeſted an infinite Power and Goodneſs. By theſe Miracles he has made it appear that he was the Son of GOD, and that his Doctrine was true. His Life was perfectly holy. We may find therein an Example of all Kind of Virtues, and particularly of an admirable Charity and Humility, of an extraordinary Zeal, and of a perfect Indifference for the World.

JESUS having lived after this Manner among the *Jews*, for about the Space of four Years, they crucified him, and put him to Death at the Feaſt of the Paſſover: But he roſe again the third Day after his Death; and forty Days after his Reſurrection he aſcended into Heaven, where he ſits at the right Hand of GOD; and from whence he ſent the Holy Ghoſt to his Apoſtles upon the Day of *Pentecoſt*.

CHAP

CHAP. VIII.

Of the Preaching of the Apoſtles, and the Eſtabliſhment of the Chriſtian Religion.

THE Apoſtles having received the Holy Ghoſt in the City of *Jeruſalem*, began to preach the Goſpel there, and to confirm their Doctrine by Miracles. At firſt, they preached only in *Judea*, and to none but *Jews*: But GOD having made known to them, that the Chriſtian Religion ought to be taught to all Men, they went to preach the Goſpel throughout the World. The Apoſtles met with *Jews* in almoſt all the Places where they came, this Nation having been diſperſed for a long Time in divers Countries. It was to the *Jews* of the Diſperſion that the Apoſtles did at firſt addreſs themſelves, as the Book of *Acts* ſhews us; and it was to them that they wrote many Epiſtles. Nevertheleſs they invited all Sorts of People, without Diſtinction, as well *Gentiles* as *Jews*, to the Profeſſion of the Goſpel; and they baptized all thoſe that would become Chriſtians, *in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt*,

Ghoſt. This is the Subſtance of the Doctrine which the Apoſtles and other Miniſters of JESUS CHRIST did preach; namely, that there is but one only GOD, who created Heaven and Earth; that this true GOD, who had not been ſufficiently known till then, had made himſelf known to Men by JESUS CHRIST his Son: that this JESUS, who was crucified by the *Jews*, was riſen again; that he was the Saviour of the World, the Judge of all Men, and that all thoſe who would believe in him, ſhould be eternally happy. This Doctrine was preached by the Apoſtles with ſuch wonderful Succeſs, that in a few Years Chriſtianity was eſtabliſhed in the principal Parts of the World.

As for the *Jews*, they were deſtroyed and drove out of their Country, forty Years after the Death of our LORD. The City of *Jeruſalem* was taken by the *Romans*, and with the Temple there laid in Ruins, as JESUS CHRIST had expreſly foretold; the Judgments of GOD fell upon the *Jews*, who were diſperſed throughout the World; and ſince that Time, they have never been able to

recover

recover that Destruction, but it continues upon them to this Day.

CHAP. IX.

An Abridgment of the Christian Religion.

BUT in order to have a more exact Knowledge of the Religion preached by the Apostles, it must be known that they required two Things from Men, and promised them also two Things.

THE two Things which the Apostles required were, that Men should Believe, and that they should amend their Lives. They required in the first Place, that Men should believe in GOD, and in JESUS CHRIST; that the *Gentiles* should forsake their Religion and the Service of false Deities, and adore and serve none but the true GOD, the Creator of the World; that the *Jews* should acknowledge JESUS CHRIST for the Messias promised by the Prophets; and that *Jews* and *Gentiles* both, should believe that JESUS CHRIST came into the World for the Salvation of Men, to make Atonement for their Sins, to deliver

deliver them from Condemnation and Death, and to purchaſe for all them that believe in him a Title to eternal Life; that they ſhould receive his Doctrine as true, and that they ſhould perſevere in the Profeſſion of it. The other Thing which the Apoſtles required was, that thoſe who till then had lived very wickedly, ſhould amend their Lives, and renounce their Sins, of which the principal were Impiety, Impurity, Intemperance, Cruelty, Covetouſneſs, Injuſtice, Pride, Evil-ſpeaking, the Love of the World, and Self-love. Thoſe who were made Chriſtians, renounced theſe Sins in receiving Baptiſm; and they promiſed to live in the Practice of Virtue and Holineſs, and to obey the Commandments of JESUS CHRIST; which may be reduced to theſe three Heads, Piety towards GOD, Juſtice and Charity towards our Neighbour, and Temperance in regard to ourſelves.

UPON Condition that Men would acquit themſelves of theſe two Duties, and would give Evidence of their Faith and Repentance, the Apoſtles promiſed them two Things: Firſt, that all their paſt Sins, committed in the Time of their

their Ignorance, ſhould be pardoned: Secondly, that GOD would receive them into his Covenant, and grant them Salvation and Life eternal. Theſe are the two Things that the Apoſtles gave Men Aſſurance of by Baptiſm; but as for thoſe that refuſed to become Chriſtians, or that being Chriſtians did not live as JESUS CHRIST had ordained, the Apoſtles declared, that they ſhould be excluded from Salvation, and were ſubject to Condemnation and Death eternal.

THIS is the Sum of the Chriſtian Religion, as it was preached by the Apoſtles. It is our Duty to adhere conſtantly to it, to love it, to do according as it directs, living godly in this World, and expecting our Salvation from the Mercy of GOD; that ſo, when JESUS CHRIST ſhall come at the laſt Day to render to every one according to his Works, we may eſcape the Puniſhments which this Religion threatens wicked People with, and partake of that Glory and everlaſting Happineſs which it promiſes to the Faithful.

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